

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-10, 13-14 and 20-22 stand rejected under § 102 on the basis of Teng et al. '033. Independent claims 1 and 20 have been amended to better define the present invention over the cited reference. Applicants traverse this rejection because the reference does not disclose (or suggest) a seed layer having a thickness of not more than 2 nm, the thickness being determined assuming that the seed layer has a continuous thickness.

The '033 reference discloses a magnetic recording medium having an Al substrate, an NiP layer, a Ta_2O_5 layer, an InBi globule layer, a Cr layer, a CoCrPt-based magnetic layer and a C (carbon) overcoat. However, in this magnetic recording medium, the InBi globule layer, which corresponds to an island-like seed of the present invention, has an approximate thickness of about 150 to 250 Å (15 to 25 nm) as shown in the table in column 11, lines 20 to 28. The thickness disclosed in the reference is notably larger than the thickness of the seed layer recited in amended claims 1 and 20 of this application.

In the practice of the present invention, the thickness of the seed layer in the magnetic recording medium is significant, because, as disclosed on page 9, line 31 to page 10, line 10 of the specification, such a reduced thickness of the seed layer does not adversely affect a magnetostatic property of the magnetic layer nor a crystal orientation of the magnetic layer. It also does not adversely affect an epitaxial growth of the Cr-based underlayer and magnetic layer. Withdrawal of the rejection of independent claims 1 and 20, and their related dependent claims, is respectfully requested.

Claims 11-12 stand rejected under § 103 on the basis of the '033 reference and Chen et al. '750. Applicants traverse this rejection for the reasons given with respect to independent claims 1 and 20. Withdrawal is requested.

For the foregoing reasons, applicants believe that this case is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The examiner should call applicants' attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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